



NEWS RELEASE

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Hybrid-Electric Vehicles Exempted from Smog Check

SACRAMENTO -- The Department of Consumer Affairs, Bureau of Automotive Repair (DCA/BAR) is making it more convenient for Californians to own Hybrid-Electric Vehicles (HEV) by exempting them from biennial and change-of-ownership Smog Check inspections.

A hybrid-electric vehicle is defined as any passenger vehicle, truck, or bus in any weight range that uses an electric motor as a primary part of its propulsion system, as well as an internal or external combustion engine.

The following HEV's are being exempted from inspections until January 1, 2010:

- Honda Insight – all model years
- Honda Civic Hybrid – all model years
- Toyota Prius – all model years

Some currently manufactured HEV's have not been designed to allow the internal combustion engine to operate in modes which would allow either loaded or idle types of Smog Check testing. Such vehicles currently receive an "exemption certificate" at the Referee, which doesn't perform a Smog Check inspection on these vehicles, but only verifies the vehicle is a hybrid.

"This exemption eliminates the inconvenience of reporting to a Referee for owners of relatively new, environmentally friendly vehicles," says DCA Director Charlene Zettel. "We encourage the use of vehicles with lower emissions and better fuel economy."

BAR and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) have recently automated the exemption process for all HEVs identified to BAR by the manufacturers. More HEVs will be added to the exemption list as information to identify these vehicles is received by BAR.

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Some owners of 2000 model-year HEVs may have already received a registration renewal notice from DMV before the exemption process was in place, and should contact the DMV field office in order to complete their registration without a Smog Check certificate.

More information about HEVs is available from the Bureau of Automotive Repair Web site at www.bar.ca.gov. Click on "What's New", then look for Current Events - Miscellaneous - Hybrid Electric Vehicles.

BAR registers and regulates approximately 41,000 California automotive repair facilities, and licenses smog check, lamp and brake inspection stations. During the 2002/2003 Fiscal Year, BAR negotiated \$5.2 million worth of refunds, rework, or adjustments from auto repair shops on behalf of consumers.

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